



(12)

EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

(88) Date of publication A3:
02.02.2000 Bulletin 2000/05

(51) Int. Cl.⁷: E04F 15/04

(43) Date of publication A2:
05.01.2000 Bulletin 2000/01

(21) Application number: 99203328.2

(22) Date of filing: 29.04.1994

(84) Designated Contracting States:
AT BE CH DE DK ES FR GB GR IE IT LI LU MC NL
PT SE

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(30) Priority: 10.05.1993 SE 9301595

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(62) Document number(s) of the earlier application(s) in
accordance with Art. 76 EPC:
99202903.3 / 0 969 163
98201555.4 / 0 877 130

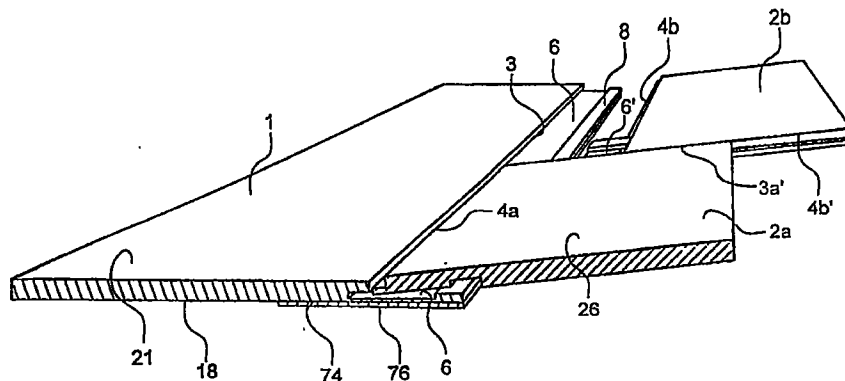
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(54) **A method for laying and mechanically joining floor panels and a method for producing a floor**

(57) The invention relates to a system for laying and mechanically joining building panels, especially thin, hard, floating floors. Adjacent joint edges (3, 4) of two panels (1, 2) engage each other to provide a first mechanical connection locking the joint edges (3, 4) in a first direction (D1) perpendicular to the principal plane of the panels. In each joint, there is further provided a strip (6) which is integrated with one joint edge (3) and which projects behind the other joint edge (4). The strip

(6) has an upwardly protruding locking element (8) engaging in a locking groove (14) in the rear side (16) of the other joint edge (4) to form a second mechanical connection locking the panels (1, 2) in a second direction (D2) parallel to the principal plane of the panels and at right angles to the joint. Both the first and the second mechanical connection allow mutual displacement of joined panels (1, 2) in the direction of the joint.

Fig. 5





European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 99 20 3328

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Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.6)
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			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.6)
			E04F A47G
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 15 December 1999	Examiner Ayiter, J
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	

EPO FORM 1503 03.82 (P/AC01)

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report. The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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15-12-1999

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